

# The Living Well Series: Engaging the Lymphatic System to Fight Inflammation

Your amazing body is completely equipped to clean and self-heal. But it doesn't always heal itself right? So why is that? It simply can't when the system that handles the cleaning task (the lymphatic system) slacks on its duty. The garbage doesn't get carried out, and the body shifts into an inflammatory state.

In today's post I am going to share the components of the lymphatic system, how they work, what might cause your lymphatic system to fall behind on the job and then share 3 things you can do to jumpstart that all important system back into action.

## So what makes up the lymphatic system?

The lymphatic system is a complex network comprised of the following components:

- **Lymphatic Fluid:** the clear fluid around the cells that carries away waste product.
- **Lymphatic Vessels:** collect this fluid and send it towards the center of the body. There are 2x as many lymph vessels as there are blood vessels!
- **Lymphatic Nodes & Organs:** are the filtering stations and include Bone Marrow, Thymus, Spleen, Tonsils-Adenoids, Appendix, and Nodes. We are home to 400-700 lymph nodes, half which reside in our abdomen.

## How does it work?

Unlike blood, which flows throughout the body in a continuous loop, lymph flows in only one direction—upward toward the neck. Lymphatic vessels connect to two subclavian veins, which are located on either sides of the neck near the

collarbones, where the fluid re-enters the circulatory system.

While the circulatory system can count on the powerhouse of the heart to move blood, lymph fluid is propelled through the lymph vessels by just the rhythmic contractions of teeny muscular units called lymphangions.

The reality is that you have twice as much lymph fluid in your body as blood. The lymph continuously bathes each cell and drains away the detritus in a circulatory system powered only by your breathing and movement. If the movement of the lymph stopped entirely you would die in a matter of hours.

Because lymph fluid literally has contact with every cell in the body, the effects of lymphatic stagnation are incredibly diverse.

### **How does it get stuck?**

When the lymph system is compromised, chronic inflammation occurs. This stagnation is the result of the cumulative effect of diet, poor eliminating, and acidic pH levels. A diet that leads to digestive imbalances causes slowed elimination that then leads to an acidic environment of backed up waste. This waste is inflammation.

Stress is a multiplier on top of everything else and forces the body to manufacture and secrete excess stress-fighting hormones to boost energy. The waste products of these hormones are highly acidic adding further to the pH imbalance of the body. Chronic stress shifts the chemistry of the body to a steady acidic state contributing further to lymph congestion.



**3 things you can do to reset your lymphatic system:**



when they believe they have been doing the right thing for their health, to only discover down the line that it actually created deeper and more serious problems. It is frustrating as a health practitioner to see so many women, under ill advice, actually exacerbate the root causes of the menstrual symptoms they are trying to fix. This issue must be taken more seriously by all women as it not only impacts their fertility and overall sense of wellbeing, but also the next generations to come.



Today I will share a case story from the youngest group of women I typically see in my practice. It is important to note this is a very common case which would conventionally be treated with hormonal birth control to suppress symptoms.

### **Young Girls with Menstrual Imbalances: Beth's Story**

I am always uplifted by the opportunity to address elimination imbalances early in a young woman's life because our work together not only establishes a symptom-free healthy adulthood, but will benefit any future generation she may choose to have. This young lady, if she stays on this path, now understands she can actually impact her own health and well-being and won't face the issues her mother or grandmother had with chronic symptoms like uterine fibroids, menstrual hemorrhaging and ovarian cancer setting in during their 40's.

Beth, a shy and scholarly 15 year old, was brought to my

office by her mother for help due to prolonged and painful menses of 7 days followed by up to another 7 days of clear discharge. The discharge would have barely ended and she would begin bleeding again. Beth also shared that she regularly experienced frequent loose bowel movements and woke during the night to urinate—both clear signs her kidneys were working very hard, yet still could not keep up.

### **Here's What I Saw:**

Based on my intake and her symptoms of skin issues, dry/brittle hair and nighttime head perspiration, I suspected Beth had a very low vitality and high state of inflammation. The discharge and pain she experienced only confirmed that her body was highly inflamed. Her body was using her uterus to dump the acids not removed by the bowels and kidneys. At the same time, her body was attempting to use as many emergency exits as possible to clean the wastes not being eliminated by her kidneys—her skin, her bowels, her vagina, and she had chronic sinusitis.

### **Here's What I Did:**

While I had experience with a known protocol that would address the vaginal discharge directly, I was concerned the intensity of the drainage would trigger an aggravation in her urinary tract. It was clear to me I needed to regulate Beth's bowels first (frequent loose stools) which would keep the kidneys from working so hard (night urination) to then take the pressure off the uterus so it was not in a constant cleaning mode. Because her body was dumping acids through her bowels and her uterus, it was necessary for the first protocol to support her kidneys at this stage in the process. Beth began by taking three gemmotherapy extracts—Blueberry and Birch Sap each morning and Lingonberry each evening.

We also had a serious talk about diet. To begin with she needed to alkalize her body, so I suggested she begin by eating the all fruit breakfast to help her lymphatic system get off to a good start each morning. I also know dairy

products are not kind whatsoever to women with menstrual symptoms of any sort. Beth was a yogurt lover and that was going to be a hard change for her. I suggested she get started with the fruit in the morning and the Gemmo protocol and see for herself how her next menses went. If she saw some results she may be more inclined to make the switch off dairy. Beth felt that was fair.

### **Here's What Happened:**

After two weeks Beth reported she was now only having 2 bowel movements daily as opposed to 4 or more and while she did have a painful menses, it was much shorter in length and with 50% less cramping than in the past. These were all good signs her body was beginning to respond. While she was still waking at night to urinate, it was only once compared to three times indicting her kidneys were not working so hard. She also reported she was willing to go dairy free the next month to see if she could improve her symptoms further. That was a very mature decision for a 15 year old and the right one.

After a total of six weeks on the protocol and the dietary changes, much of the inflammation had come down and Beth's next menstrual cycle increased in length to 21 days. Our goal would be 28-30 days, however, my experience has been with cases like it often takes until the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> cycle to get there. Much depends on how compliant clients are with changing their diet and routinely taking their Gemmos.

While there is still plenty of work ahead for us, it is clear this first stage of Gemmotherapy treatment is getting Beth's body out of the acute inflammatory state she was in and beginning to balance elimination.

### **Final Thoughts:**

Had Beth's mom taken the conventional or allopathic path for her daughter's symptoms, the underlying cause would never be addressed. Once Beth decided in her 20's or 30's to stop the birth control to get pregnant, she very likely would face

great difficulty with conception because her body would have an incredible build-up of lymphatic wastes and be in a state of acidosis. This build-up of waste impairs organ function, particularly reproductive organs. Because birth control meds suppress and alter normal menstruation, those organs have not had an opportunity to clean for years! Future fertility is not always the first thing on our minds when we see our daughters struggle with painful periods, but it needs to be. It's often hard for us to imagine the distant future, so it might be easier to sum it up this way: any action that **decreases by one third** the body's ability to rid itself of wastes leads nowhere other than chronic inflammatory dis-ease. I encourage all of my clients to pause and mindfully consider any "solution" that would impair the long-term health and well-being of their daughters—even if those solutions seem to resolve the current symptoms. It's very important for everyone to know there is a natural, holistic path that eliminates the symptoms because it deals directly with the root of the problem.

While I will be moving off the topic of women's health for the next four weeks to share my adventures and findings in Europe, it is by no means the end to this discussion. It is far too near and dear to me to drop and a dialogue I want to see in a much wider arena than just this blog. Please do share this information with your female family members, friends and colleagues. We **can** change the course of women's health care from the grassroots level, but only if we inform one another and take the steps required.

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- reoccurring UTIs
- irritable bowel symptoms
- staph
- migraines

These young ladies will also learn that optimizing and bringing balance to their elimination methods naturally early in life will save them from the countless chronic symptoms down the road that their mothers or grandmothers may have struggled with.



## **2. Women in their 30s on hormonal birth control or currently coming off birth control.**

These women are trying to manage the symptoms that they had in their teens or twenties which have now returned. They usually come to see me for one or more of the above secondary symptoms that have developed while on a menses suppressing birth control method. While some of these young women have made the connection between their symptoms and their birth control method, most have not. Most have never considered that suppressing their menstrual cycles could lead to any problems. This is where our conversation begins about how the body cleans and the importance of optimizing all routes of elimination. The protocol I use for these women begins with changing birth control methods, cleaning the inflammation that has built up and then going to work balancing their

elimination so that the original pre-birth control symptoms are healed:

- Brown bleeding at the start or end of menses
- Clotting
- Heavy bleeding
- Pain that keeps you from your normal activities
- Bleeding that starts and then stops
- Mid-cycle bleeding
- Cycles that are shorter than 28 days or longer than 32

These symptoms can all be addressed with a combination of gemmotherapy, homeopathy and in most cases, dietary changes.



### **3. Women ready to get pregnant.**

These ladies have either been told by a physician their chances are low or have been trying and have yet to successfully conceive. The common factor between them is they have had past experiences with a menses suppression birth control, menstrual irregularities since their teens or have been prescribed *Accutane* for their acne.

My work with these women, as with all my clients, begins with restoring elimination. This can take some time particularly when *Accutane* has been used. Then I move on to a protocol especially for cleaning and fortifying the organs that SUPPORT fertility (adrenal glands, pituitary, liver, and kidneys). By focusing on the support organs we are addressing the root of the problem.

It's important to see that the process I use is in direct opposition to tradition fertility treatment that pushes reproductive organs which have already given clear indications they are not operating optimally. In that scenario the body has already indicated it cannot support the creation of life and the use of conventional medical science forces the issue rather than healing the root cause. This also happens to

be why these pregnancies become high risk—there is an increased rate of pre-eclampsia among mothers, a greater percentage of premature births, and birth defects under these conditions of conception.

For these reasons and because I know healing the root of the condition works, I follow protocols that clean and fortify the organs that support women's fertility. My protocols include gemmotherapy, homeopathy and dietary changes.

### **Right Reasons, Wrong Choice**

Believing you have been doing the right thing for you or your family, to only discover down the line that you were actually creating deeper and more lasting problems is truly heartbreaking. I am disappointed that so many women I work with have been, under ill advice, exacerbating the root causes of their menstrual symptoms. I take this issue very seriously because, for many women, this not only impacts their fertility and their overall sense of wellbeing, but the next generations to come. Next week I will discuss this topic further and share some case stories from each of the three groups.